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NIGELLA BITES



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INTRODUCTION

Nigella Bites was the popular TV series in 2001, based on the book *How to Eat*. Here are some taster recipes from the book to whet your appetite. The example recipes have been divided into the following categories:

[Comfort Food](#), [Suppertime](#), [TV Dinners](#), [All Day Breakfast](#), [Slow Cook Weekend](#), [Temple Food](#), [Trashy](#), [Rainy Days](#), [Legacy](#), [Party Girl](#)

You can buy both the books, *Nigella Bites* and *How to Eat* from the [Channel 4 shop](#).

[Starters and Light Meals](#) | [Main Courses](#) | [Desserts](#)



All recipes and many more are available in the book *Nigella Bites* and *How to Eat* available from the [Channel 4 shop](#).



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Join Nigella in her new series [Forever Summer](#) and savour the taste of summer with Nigella's new mouth-watering recipes.



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NEW SERIES - SEPTEMBER 5, 8.30 PM

FOREVER SUMMER - Even when sunshine is a distant memory and the only trace of holiday is the sand on the bottom of your discarded holiday flip-flops, don't consign yourself to winter blues - with Nigella's new series, it's going to be *Forever Summer*.

In the new eight-part series Nigella cooks irresistible summery recipes that can be eaten at any time of the year. The food ranges around the world: from succulent Spanish and Italian dishes to the fragrant mezze of the Eastern Mediterranean; from roasted vegetables and barbecued sea bass to Moroccan roast lamb and Mauritian prawn curry; and food that conjures up the traditional strawberries-and-cream feel of an English summer afternoon or Indian summer evening at home.

Keeping the sun shining, there's a fabulous selection of unusual ice creams and puddings - from Margarita or Cheesecake ice cream to something more Ibiza-like: Slut-Red Raspberries in Chardonnay Jelly! And to complete the summer mood, there are cocktails, both classic and new.

Forever Summer is about easy cooking and easy eating, laid-back recipes that keep you feeling like summer never ended and that the kitchen is, in Nigella's words, "not a place you escape from, but the place you escape to."

Forever Summer starts on September 5 2002.



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PROGRAMME ONE - YELLOW

Happiness Soup | Lemon Drope

HAPPINESS SOUP

Nigella: *Forgive the tweeness of the title, but this is a soup of such sunny, mood-enhancing yellowness that it overcomes even the most pervasively innate cynicism. To eat this is to feel cheered; even cooking it gives me a lift. It's incredibly easy to make, but that's not the clincher. This golden broth, rice-thickened and studded with a confetti dice of yellow courgettes and sprightly with lemon is pure joy. You only have to see it to believe it. And not surprisingly in some Middle-Eastern cultures, it is believed, in Claudia Roden's words, that "eating yellow foods will result in laughter and happiness". This, then, is a yellow soup to banish the blues.*

Ingredients:

- 500g yellow courgettes (2 large)
- zest and juice of 1 lemon
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1teaspoon turmeric
- 1 litre chicken stock
- 100g basmati rice
- Maldon salt and pepper

Instructions:

Cut the courgettes - wash them by all means if you want, but don't bother to peel them - into 5mm rings, and then finely dice them. Put them into a pan with the lemon zest and oil, stir to coat, then cook on a gentle heat for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until they've slightly softened. Stir in the turmeric and pour in the stock and lemon juice and then drop in the rice. And for the stock here, as usual I make up some bouillon concentrate with water; you could use vegetable stock if you prefer, but I love the mellow goldenness you get from chicken. Cook, uncovered, for 10-20 minutes, or just until the courgettes and rice are tender. Leave to cool slightly before serving so that you eat the soup warm rather than hot.

Serves 4-6.

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LEMON DROP

Nigella: *"This is citron presse for grown-ups: frosty-white, acid sharp and as deeply lemony as you could want.*

Ingredients:

- 1 lemon, peeled and quartered
- 1 tablespoon caster sugar (or sugar syrup)
- 50ml limoncello or other lemon liqueur
- 50ml Triple Sec



This recipe was taken from 'Nigella Bites'. You can buy this in the [Channel 4 shop](#).

- handful of ice cubes

Instructions:

Put the lemon pieces into the goblet of a blender, sprinkle over the sugar and leave to steep to let the sugar dissolve for a few minutes (if you're using sugar syrup, just bung it all in, everything you've got, and blitz away) then pour in the limoncello and Triple Sec, tumble in the ice cubes and whizz away on the cocktail-shaker setting or however your blender is organised. When everything's combined, thickened and ice-white, pour into a large tumbler and knock back.

Makes 1

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PROGRAMME TWO - BLACK

Prawn And Black Rice Salad With Vietnamese Dressing
| Black And Blue Beef

PRAWN AND BLACK RICE SALAD WITH VIETNAMESE DRESSING

Nigella: *This didn't start life quite like this. That's to say, I happened to have a bit of cold black rice and some Vietnamese dipping sauce left over in the fridge one day, along with a fresh consignment of raw, peeled prawns. The black rice had gone with a fish curry; the dipping sauce I'd eaten with a lemongrass-stuffed roast chicken. I'm telling you this simply to illustrate that this is what real cooking is about: you just go with what you've got.*

In fact you could play with this a number of ways. You could have the rice hot, the hot prawns, too, just stirred through with the cold dipping sauce-turned-dressing; in place of the prawns, you could have hot, quickly fried squid rings; you could forgo the fish part and turn this vegetarian by adding some soft, jade chunks of avocado to the cold black rice and chilli-speckled dressing. The dipping sauce anyway is something I wouldn't want to live without: I love it with roast or poached chicken, grilled chicken wings, to dunk prawns into, or to spoon over plain steamed pak choi or broccoli. I could go on - and often do.

The black rice is real black rice, not wild rice and not white rice dyed black with squid ink. It's packaged by Merchant Gourmet and I get it from the supermarket, usually without any trouble.

Ingredients:

For the Vietnamese dipping sauce/ dressing

- 2 cloves garlic, minced or crushed
- 2 fresh Thai birdseye chillies or other red chillies, finely sliced
- approx. 4cm fresh ginger, finely minced
- 4 tablespoons fish sauce
- 2 tablespoons lime juice (about 1 lime)
- 4 tablespoons water
- 2 tablespoons caster sugar

for the salad

- 250g Nanking black rice
- 500g raw, peeled prawns
- salt
- juice of half a lemon

Instructions:

To make the sauce, simply mix all the ingredients together. It doesn't get much less complicated than that, frankly. Well, there is the small matter of the rice and prawns. The rice you just cook by following the instructions on the packet; the prawns you poach in some simmering salted



This recipe was taken from 'Nigella Bites'. You can buy this in the [Channel 4 shop](#).

water, to which you've added the juice of half a lemon, for 5 minutes or so or until just cooked through but still very tender. Let both rice and prawns cool, then give the sauce a quick stir and spoon some over the rice, fork this through and then tumble the prawns on top, spooning a little more sauce over as you go.

Serves 2 as a main course; four as a starter

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BLACK AND BLUE BEEF

Nigella: 'Black and blue' is the New York restaurateur's term for the way I like my steak cooked: charred on the outside, meltingly, quiveringly rare within. It is in the spirit of internationalism, and in deference to this year's World Cup, that I suggest this now Korean style, in a soy, ginger and garlic marinade, and then thinly sliced so that you end up with a plateful of spice-seared, ruby-fleshed rags, the whole both scorched and tender.

Ingredients:

4 approx. 4cm-thick slices, cut from the top of the rump (approx. 1.5kg in weight)

For the marinade:

- 5 tablespoons soy sauce
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2.5 cm fresh ginger, minced
- 2 tablespoons sesame oil
- 2 teaspoons caster sugar
- black pepper
- 4 spring onions, chopped roughly

Instructions:

Put the steaks in a large freezer bag and add all the marinade ingredients. Tie the bag expelling any air, and squidge everything around before leaving in the fridge overnight (or even for a day or so) or for at least an hour at room temperature. Grill on a viscously hot barbecue or on a griddle. I like to do not much more than blacken the outside (which means about 5 minutes per side) but you, of course, should cook this just as long as you like. Leave to stand for a few minutes before carving into thin slices.

Serves 4

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PROGRAMME THREE - PINK

Spiced Pink Soup | Watermelon, Feta And Black Olive Salad

SPICED PINK SOUP

Nigella: *Chilled soups have more going for them than mere retro charm. Temperature-cooling, unfussy, as soothing for the cook as the eater, they make the perfect, light summer starter. The pink in this particular soup comes from beetroot, toned down with sour cream and further harmoniously soured by lime; the spices are ground cumin and coriander; the final, velvety emulsion is the purest puce.*

I agree that making vats of stock may not be quite the thing when having to cook for a large number of people in high summer, but believe me I am not suggesting you do any such thing. A good make of fresh chicken stock in a tub will do fine here, as would Benedicta's Touch of Taste chicken bouillon concentrate or Marigold vegetable stock powder. The idea is anyway not to get you slaving over a hot stove right now. You know that song, Summertime, and the cooking is easy...

OK yes, beetroot takes a long time to roast properly, but they taste so good when intensified thus by the oven (not that you have to do anything to them while they cook) and that's the extent of the cooking thereafter. In other words, this is a low-effort enterprise.

Ingredients:

- 2 large or 3 medium raw beetroot
- juice of 1 lime
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1.5 litres hot chicken or vegetable stock
- salt and pepper
- 2 spring onions, halved lengthwise
- 250ml sour cream

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 200C/gas mark 6. Wrap each beetroot in tin foil and bake for one and a half to two hours until tender. Unwrap partly and leave for a while until bearable to touch. And I'd put on washing up gloves for this, too, or you'll have a touch of the Lady Macbeth's about you after. Gingerly peel them - when they're this well-cooked the skin should rub off easily - and then cut them into chunks. Put them in the processor with the juice of the lime, and the cumin and coriander and blitz to a pulp while pouring the stock down the funnel. You may want to wear an apron for this (or stand well back). Indeed, you may feel happier doing this in two batches. Taste for salt and pepper, blitz again and then pour into a large jug. Add the split spring onions and leave to cool before chilling, clingfilmed, in the fridge for up to three days. Just before you want to eat this, pick out the spring onions and, to make for a desirably creamy base, blitz again while adding the sour cream (175ml first, then see if you want the



This recipe was taken from 'Nigella Bites'. You can buy this in the [Channel 4 shop](#).

rest). Decant back into the jug (for easier pouring) then duly pour into waiting teacups. If you're using more capacious soup bowls in place of the cups, you may find you feed only six from this.

Serves 6-8

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WATERMELON, FETA AND BLACK OLIVE SALAD

Nigella: As improbable as it might sound, this combination is utterly fantastic, both savoury and refreshing at the same time. You can pare it down to the essential contrast, and serve no more than a plate of chunked watermelon, sprinkled with feta and mint and spritzed with lime, but this full-length version is hardly troublesome to make and once made will, I assure you, become a regular feature of your summer table.

Ingredients:

- 1 small red onion
- 2-4 limes, depending on juiciness
- 1.5 kg sweet, ripe watermelon
- 250g feta cheese
- bunch of fresh flat-leaf parsley
- bunch of mint, chopped
- 3-4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 100g pitted black olives
- black pepper

Instructions:

Peel and halve the red onion and cut into very fine half-moons and put in a small bowl to steep with the lime juice, to bring out the transparent pickiness in the onions and diminish their rasp. Two limes' worth should do it, but you can find the fruits disappointingly dried up and barren when you cut them in half, in which case add more.

Remove the rind and pips from the watermelon, and cut into approximately 4cm triangular chunks, if that makes sense (maths are not my strong point). Cut the feta into similar sized pieces and put them both into a large, wide shallow bowl. Tear off sprigs of parsley so that it is used like a salad leaf, rather than a garnish, and add to the bowl along with the chopped mint.

Tip the now glowingly puce onions, along with their pink juices over the salad in the bowl, add the oil and olives, then using your hands toss the salad very gently so that the feta and melon don't lose their shape. Add a good grinding of black pepper and taste to see whether the dressing needs more lime. Hava Negila! The taste of Tel Aviv Sunshine!

Serves 8

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PROGRAMME FOUR - WHITE

[Rice Paper Rolls](#) | [White Chocolate And Passionfruit Mousse](#)

RICE PAPER ROLLS

Nigella: *I'll be honest with you: I had longed to make some version of these little rolls for years but either essential laziness or fear that they would be frighteningly complicated put me off. Now that I've made them, I can't quite see what I was on about. Fiddly they may be, but I think they must be one of the easiest recipes to make in the whole book. And also one of the loveliest: there is something about the light, unwheatenness of rice pasta (which in effect these sheets just are) and the bundles of fresh herbs within that make them compulsive and uplifting eating. You can, and this is how I ate them first in a Vietnamese restaurant, add some cooked prawns and cooled, stir-fried chopped pork along with the herbs and rice vermicelli, but I can't honestly see that you need to.*

You can often find the rice pancakes, or rice sheets (emphatically not rice paper) in the supermarket. If you're unlucky in this respect, you will have to track down an Asian store, which offers a gastro-reward of its own.

Ingredients:

- 100g rice vermicelli
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon Thai fish sauce
- bunch fresh mint, roughly chopped
- bunch fresh Thai basil, roughly chopped
- half a cucumber, cut into thin batons
- 6 spring onions, finely sliced
- 12 rice pancakes
- soy sauce for serving (optional)

Instructions:

Soak the vermicelli according to the instructions on the packet, and drain once the translucent threads are rehydrated.

Flavour the vermicelli with the rice vinegar, soy and fish sauces, and then add the chopped herbs, cucumber and spring onions. Mix gently with your hands to try to combine the noodles, herbs and vegetables.

Soak the rice pancakes (again, according to packet instructions) in a shallow bowl of hot water and then lay each one on a tea towel to pat dry. Run a fairly narrow strip of noodle mixture down the middle of the pancake, fold over one half and then carefully roll it up as tightly as you can. Slice each roll into four and then arrange them on a plate. If you want, pour some soy sauce into a few little bowls for dipping the rolls into as you eat.

Makes 48 rolls

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This recipe was taken from 'Nigella Bites'. You can buy this in the [Channel 4 shop](#).

WHITE CHOCOLATE AND PASSIONFRUIT MOUSSE

Nigella: So much in cooking, as in the rest of life I suppose, is about contrast, about balance. Here the acerbic fragrance of the passionfruit undercuts the otherwise over-egged richness of the white chocolate: this gives you flavour, intensity, sweetness and light.

On standing, the clear, sour-sweet juices of the fruit collect under the mousse: place raspberries in the glass first (again contrast, this time of colour, too) and let them become plumply infused and almost headily soused beneath.

Ingredients:

- 300g white chocolate
- 6 eggs, separated
- 10 passionfruit
- 300g - 500g raspberries

Instructions:

Break the chocolate into pieces and melt in the microwave for about 3 minutes, or in a bowl over a pan of simmering water then set the bowl aside, and let the chocolate cool a little.

Beat the egg whites until stiff but not dry. Mix the egg yolks into the cooled chocolate, though be gentle to ensure it doesn't seize. Cut the passionfruit in half and scoop them, juice, pulp, seeds, into the yolk and chocolate mixture, then fold into the egg whites until completely incorporated.

Line the bottom of either a big glass bowl or 8-10 small glasses with a layer of raspberries - it's hard to be specific: it depends on the diameter of the glasses, or bowl, at the base really - and pour over the mousse. Leave for a couple of hours to set in the fridge, or for at least 4 if you're using one large bowl. Strangely, given that I lean normally towards the communal rather than individual serving, I generally go the one-glass-one-person route. I think it's because this is intense enough to require - even for me - small portions, and it's impossible to dollop out as little as would fill a small glass without seeming mean.

Serves 8 -10 depending on the size of glass used

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PROGRAMME FIVE - RED

Crab Linguini | Slut Red Raspberries In Chardonnay Jelly

CRAB LINGUINI

Nigella: *You know, I'd eaten this a couple of times and made it myself (throwing in handfuls of peppery watercress as I did so) a few more before I realised it was, give or take, the River Café's recipe - by which I mean to say that although the amounts and full list of ingredients vary, it is an English seaside version of their fabulous original. I suppose that's how you know something's become a classic: it just seeps its way into the culinary language.*

Crab is, I think, hugely underrated - so much better than lobster, and much cheaper. You can use frozen crab meat for this, but it's best to get a fishmonger to cook and pick out the meat for you.

Don't let the fact that a pestle and mortar is indicated put you off: this is fabulously easy to make.

Ingredients:

- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 scant tablespoon Maldon salt
- 1 large red chilli
- 1.25kg undressed crab, to give you 200g white meat and 100g brown meat
- 125ml extra virgin olive oil
- juice and zest of 1 lemon
- 500g linguine
- handful fresh parsley, chopped
- handful watercress leaves, roughly torn

Instructions:

Put a large pan of water on to boil for the pasta. In a large pestle and mortar pulverise the peeled garlic cloves with the salt, so that it makes a smooth paste. Then add the chopped and seeded chilli and crush again until you have a gloriously red-tinged mixture. Tip in the crab meat, breaking it up gently with a fork, and pour in the oil. Zest the lemon into the mortar and then add the juice. Using a fork, beat well to mix, and then you are ready to cook your pasta. So do so, and then drain the pasta and tip into a warmed serving bowl. Immediately pour over the crab sauce and toss the pasta about in it, then throw in the parsley and watercress and toss again.

Serves 6 as a starter; 4 as a main course.

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SLUT RED RASPBERRIES IN CHARDONNAY JELLY

Nigella: *SYou might think that no recipe could live up to this title. It's a reasonable presumption, but thank God, a wrong one. This is heaven on the plate: the wine-soused raspberries take on a stained glass, lucent red, their very*



This recipe was taken from 'Nigella Bites'. You can buy this in the [Channel 4 shop](#).

raspberriness enhanced; the soft, translucently pale coral just-set jelly in which they sit has a heady, floral fragrance that could make a grateful eater weep. If there's one pudding you make from this book, please, please make it this.

This recipe was emailed to me from Australia from my erstwhile editor, Eugenie Boyd. I've fiddled with it a bit, but it is the best present a foodwriter could ever have. Now it's yours.

Ingredients:

- 1 bottle good fruity Chardonnay
- 300g raspberries
- 1 vanilla pod, split lengthways
- 5 gelatine leaves
- 250g caster sugar
- double cream to serve

Instructions:

Place the wine and berries in a bowl and allow to steep for half an hour. Strain the wine into a saucepan and keep the raspberries to one side. Heat the wine with vanilla pod until nearly boiling and leave to steep on one side for 15 minutes. Soak the gelatine leaves - which you can find in the supermarket these days - in cold water for about 5 minutes. Meanwhile, after removing the vanilla pod, reheat the wine and stir in the sugar until it dissolves; allow to boil if you want to lose the alcohol. Add a third of the hot wine to the wrung-out gelatine leaves in a measuring jug and stir to dissolve, then add this mixture back into the rest of the wine and stir well. Strain into a large jug. Place the raspberries, equally, into 6 flattish, clear glass serving bowls, and pour the strained wine over the top.

Allow to set in the fridge for at least 3 hours, though a day would be fine if you want to make this well ahead, and take out of the fridge 15 minutes before serving.

Serve some double cream in a jug, and let people pour this into the fragrant, tender, fruit-jewelled jelly as they eat.

Serves 6

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PROGRAMME SIX - BROWN

[Soba Noodles With Sesame Seeds](#) | [Figs For 1001 Nights](#)

SOBA NOODLES WITH SESAME SEEDS

Nigella: *I love the Japanese way of eating cold noodles: I just lift a bowl to my face, fork furiously and slurp. If you want to make these part of a meal, then know that they go wonderfully well with salmon: just get some fillets, sear them in a hot pan, leaving the interior fleshily coral. But I love eating these as they are, in huge quantities and - preferably - alone. Because they're served cold, you can profitably keep leftovers for midnight fridge-raiding later. Boxed into foil containers, they are the perfect, if unconventional, food to take along for a picnic.*

Ingredients:

- 75g sesame seeds
- salt
- 250g soba noodles
- 2 teaspoons rice vinegar
- 5 teaspoons soy sauce
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil
- 5 spring onions

Instructions:

Toast the sesame seeds in a dry pan over a high heat until they look golden brown, and tip them into a bowl.

Bring a large pan of water to the boil and add some salt. Put in the soba noodles and cook them for about 6 minutes (or according to packet instructions) until they are tender but not mushy. Have a bowl of iced water waiting to plunge them into after draining.

In the bowl you are going to serve them in, mix the vinegar, soy sauce, honey and oil. Then finely slice the spring onions and put them into the bowl with the cooled, drained noodles and mix together thoroughly before adding the sesame seeds and tossing again.

Leave the sesame seed noodles for about half an hour to let the flavours develop, although this is not absolutely necessary or sometimes even possible.

Serves 4 as part of a meal; or 2 when eaten, gratifyingly, as they are.

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FIGS FOR 1001 NIGHTS

Nigella: *This is so simple - scarcely a recipe really - but so*



This recipe was taken from 'Forever Summer'. You can buy this in the [Channel 4 shop](#).

good. Unless you get figs straight from the tree they sometimes need the blistering heat of an oven or grill to bring out all their honeyed sweetness. The cinnamon is emphatic, certainly, but it doesn't overwhelm the whole; it, rather, infuses the fruit, along with the kitchen you're cooking it in, with mellow spiciness. This is the pudding to end a slow-grazing, long-picking dinner eaten outside on a warm, balmy night.

If you haven't got any vanilla sugar, just use ordinary caster sugar and add a drop of pure vanilla extract along with the flower waters. A Middle-Eastern store of some kind will stock packets of slivered pistacchios, vividly green and splintered into little boat-shaped shards. But if you can't get them, just buy shelled pistacchios from a health shop or supermarket and chop them roughly with a knife or mezzaluna yourself.

Ingredients:

- 12 black figs
- 50g unsalted butter
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon vanilla sugar
- 1 and a half teaspoons rosewater
- 1 and a half teaspoons orange flower water
- 500g tub mascarpone cheese
- 100g slivered pistacchios

Instructions:

Preheat a grill or oven to the fiercest it will go. Quarter the figs, taking care not to cut all the way through to the bottom, so that they open like flowers, or young birds squawking to be fed worms by their mummy, and sit them, thus opened, in a heatproof dish into which they fit snugly. Melt the butter in a small saucepan, then add the cinnamon, sugar and flower waters. Stir to combine and pour into the figs.

Blister under the hot grill or bake in the oven for a few minutes and then serve; it's that quick. Just give each person a couple of figs on a side-plate. Splodge alongside some mascarpone over which you drizzle some of the conker-dark syrup, then sprinkle over some of those green, green shards of pistacchio.

Serves 6.

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PROGRAMME SEVEN - GREEN

Fresh Green Gimlet | Chicken, Parsley And Almond Salad

FRESH GREEN GIMLET

Nigella: *This takes inspiration in part from a mojito, that bar classic of the late nineties - mint, sugar syrup, lime, rum and soda - and in part from a gimlet, that intense and trad mix of vodka and lime cordial. And frankly, this child outstrips either of its parents. When I gave it to a friend to taste after making it for the first time, I had to fight to get the glass back from her.*

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon caster sugar
- juice of 1 lime
- small handful of fresh mint leaves
- 50ml vodka
- a fistful of ice cubes or crushed ice
- dash of fizzy mineral water (or to taste)

Instructions:

Toast the sesame seeds in a dry pan over a high heat until they look golden brown, and tip them into a bowl.

Spoon the sugar into a tumbler, squeeze over the lime juice and stir to dissolve. Add the mint leaves and stab away at them in the tumbler with the end of a rolling pin; this is what's known in the business as 'muddling'. Add the vodka and ice, swill to mix and then top up with the dash of fizzy water.

Makes 1

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CHICKEN, PARSLEY AND ALMOND SALAD

Nigella: *This came about the way most of my favourite food has come about, by greedy opportunism. I had some cold chicken in the fridge, a huge bunch of parsley in a jug by the stove and had recently opened a packet of flaked almonds and I was just too hungry to think further. The important thing is to leave the parsley whole and unchopped - just tear the leaves off the stalks and heap them on the plate in a rough jumble - and to toast the almonds, which just means tossing them about over medium heat in an oil-less pan until they take on colour, at the last minute. I want the heat from them as well as the crunch.*

Ingredients:

- 1 cold cooked chicken breast, sliced and shredded
- couple of handfuls fresh flat leaf parsley



This recipe was taken from 'Nigella Bites'. You can buy this in the [Channel 4 shop](#).

- 1 tablespoonful or so extra virgin olive oil
- juice of half a lemon
- Maldon salt
- 50g or so flaked almonds, toasted

Instructions:

Using your hands, mix the parsley and chicken together in a large bowl or on a large plate. Dribble over the olive oil and, still using your hands, toss to mix. Now squeeze over the lemon juice, sprinkle over the salt and tip in most of the toasted almonds and toss again. Sprinkle over the remaining almonds, and your work here on earth is done.

Serves 1

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PROGRAMME EIGHT - AMBER

[Moroccan Roast Lamb](#) | [Honey Semifreddo](#)

MOROCCAN ROAST LAMB

Nigella: *Or how to make yourself feel basked in exotic, perfume-heavy sunshine when all about you is spirit-wizeningly cold and grey. For me, Moroccan is, so far, just a state of mind. In my defence, the crucial flavouring here is the very Moroccan ras-el-hanout, a musky, amber-coloured spice mix, heady with rosebuds, cardamom, cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, lavender, ginger, pepper, mace and, I'm not too modest to admit, nigella, which you can, if you're lucky, find at the supermarket now (or direct from Seasoned Pioneers on 0800 0682 348). But then again, crucial is a flexible term: in place of the smokily poetic ras-el-hanout, you can add to the garlic and oil below, a teaspoon of turmeric mixed with a tablespoonful each of ground coriander and cumin and a pinch each of ground cinnamon and cloves; a no less magical substitution, I promise you.*

Ingredients:

- 1 leg of lamb, approx. 2.5kg
- 1-2 tablespoons ras-el-hanout
- juice of 2 lemons
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 6 tablespoons olive oil
- bunch fresh coriander, chopped

Instructions:

Make incisions all over the leg of lamb, and then mix the ras-el-hanout with the lemon juice, oil, minced garlic and coriander. Using your fingers, push pinches of the mixture into the holes. Rub the remaining aromatic paste over the lamb and then put it into a large freezer bag, squeeze out any air and then tie it up and leave it to marinade in the fridge overnight, or for longer.

Pre-heat the oven to 200C/gas mark 6, and take the lamb out of the fridge to come to room temperature.

Put the leg of lamb into a roasting pan, squeezing any marinade out of the bag over the meat. Roast the lamb for about an hour and a half, by which time it should be aromatically blackened on the outside, and still tender and pink within. Let the lamb rest once it comes out of the oven for at least 15 minutes, though I love this a good hour after it's come out of the oven.

Serves 8

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HONEY SEMIFREDDO

Nigella: *A semifreddo is not quite an ice cream, as the name - semi-cold, in translation - suggests. There's no custard to make, and no churning required as it freezes, which makes life very much easier. What you get is a smooth, soft block of*



This recipe was taken from 'Nigella Bites'. You can buy this in the [Channel 4 shop](#).

chilled, almost frozen cream, with a texture of deep, deep velvetiness. This mellow, honey-flavoured version matches taste to texture. For some reason, sometimes when I make it, I end up with a block of uniformly buff cream; at others, I'm left with a honeyed, resin-coloured stripe along the base - or the top as it stands when you turn it out. But that's cooking for you. Either way, it works wonderfully. Pour more amber-coloured honey over as you serve, and scatter with toasted pinenuts, for quite the dreamiest, easiest pudding you could imagine.

Ingredients:

- 1 egg
- 4 egg yolks
- 100g best-quality honey, plus 3 tablespoons or so for serving
- 300ml double cream
- 25g pine nuts, toasted

Instructions:

Line a 900g/1 litre loaf tin with clingfilm. Beat the egg and egg yolks with the honey in a bowl, over a saucepan of gently simmering water, until the mixture is pale and thick. I use a wire balloon whisk for this, but if you feel like a bit of culinarily aided whirring, it will certainly be quicker with a hand-held electric whisk.

Whip the double cream until thick, and then gently fold in the egg and honey mixture. Pour into the prepared loaf tin, and cover carefully with cling film before putting it in the freezer for about 2-3 hours.

When it is ready to serve, turn out the semifreddo onto a suitably sized plate and drizzle this manilla-coloured log with honey, and sprinkle with the toasted pine nuts, before slicing. It thaws quickly as it stands, but that is part of its heavenly-textured charm. If you've got some dark, syrupy - indeed, honey-coloured - pudding wine to drink while you eat this, so much the better.

Serves 6 - 8

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CHRISTMAS BITES



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INTRODUCTION

The programme special, *Christmas Bites* was aired on Channel 4 in December, 2001.

For Nigella Christmas represents the last instance of truly seasonal eating in this country. It is the one meal of the year which we don't have to think about what to cook. As she says:

"Christmas food is the best sort of food because it's about proper, unpretentious home cooking. Feasting isn't about formality: it's about providing friends and family with good things to eat."

The following recipes are simple and stress-free. At Christmas time, there's quite enough seasonal stress already - cooking shouldn't add to it!

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The following recipes are a selection of recipes from Nigella's books, which you can buy in the [Channel 4 shop](#).

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[Pasta With Meatballs In Tomato Sauce](#)

[Chocolate Cloud Cake](#)

[Italian Sausages With Lentils](#)

[My Grandmother's Ginger Bread & Butter Pudding](#)

[The Union Square Café's Bar Nuts](#)

[Spatchcocked Birds](#)

These recipes are a selection from Nigella's best-selling book 'Nigella Bites', available in the [Channel 4 Shop](#).

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NIGELLA LAWSON'S LIFE

Nigella Lawson is one of the UK's most influential food writers, with a growing international reputation and several bestselling books to her name as well as the Channel 4 television series, *Nigella Bites*.

Born in 1960, Nigella read Medieval and Modern Languages at Oxford and went on to pursue a successful career in journalism, becoming Deputy Literary Editor of *The Sunday Times*. This was followed by a successful freelance career writing for a range of publications, from *The Guardian*, *Daily Telegraph* and *Times Magazine* in the UK to *Gourmet* and *Bon Appetit* in the USA.



Nigella's love of cooking and food started at home, becoming part of her working life when she started the restaurant column in *The Spectator* and later wrote the food column for *Vogue*. Her first book, *HOW TO EAT: The pleasures and principles of good food* was published to critical acclaim in 1998. It established Nigella's relaxed attitude to food and eating and won her a wide and dedicated audience.

HOW TO EAT was the basis for Nigella's successful Channel 4 series, *Nigella Bites*. The second series was accompanied by a tie in book of the same name, which stayed in the bestseller lists for several months and helped to take her worldwide book sales past the 1.5 million mark.

In 2000 Nigella introduced a whole new generation to the art of baking with another bestseller, ironically titled, *HOW TO BE A DOMESTIC GODDESS: Baking and the art of comfort cooking*. In 2001 Nigella was voted author of the year at the British Book Awards and her *Nigella Bites Christmas Special* went out in December that year.

In 1992 Nigella married fellow journalist and broadcaster John Diamond. John was diagnosed with throat cancer in 1997 and died in 2001. Nigella lives in London with their two children, Cosima and Bruno.

Autumn 2002 sees a new direction for Nigella with an exciting TV series and tie-in book, *FOREVER SUMMER*, full of recipes to prolong that lazy, warm summer feeling through the darker days of winter.

BOOKS

HOW TO EAT, The pleasures and principles of good food - Chatto & Windus, 1998

HOW TO BE A DOMESTIC GODDESS, Baking and the art of comfort cooking - Chatto & Windus, 2000

NIGELLA BITES - Chatto & Windus, 2001

FOREVER SUMMER - Chatto & Windus, 2002

TELEVISION

NIGELLA BITES - series 1, 2000

NIGELLA BITES - series 2, 2001

NIGELLA BITES CHRISTMAS SPECIAL - 2001
FOREVER SUMMER - autumn 2002

AWARDS AND PRIZES

British Book Awards 1998 - Illustrated Book of the Year
for *How To Eat*

British Book Awards 2000 - Author of the Year

WH Smith Book Awards 2001 - *How To Be A Domestic Goddess* shortlisted for Lifestyle Book of the Year

Guild of Food Writers 2001 - *How To Be A Domestic Goddess* - Cookery Book of the Year

World Food Media Awards 2001 - *Nigella Bites* awarded
GOLD LADLE for best television food show

WH Smith Book Awards 2002 - *Nigella Bites* awarded
Lifestyle Book of the Year



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Nigella has a unique outlook on cooking, her role and the audience. The following are juicy quotes from a variety of her books to give you a better idea of her philosophy.

ON HER ROLE AS COOK

"I am not a chef. I am not even a trained or professional cook. My qualification is as an eater." ([How To Eat](#).)

ON BEING A DOMESTIC GODDESS

"The trouble with much modern cooking is not that the food it produces is not good, but that the mood it induces in the cook is one of skin-of-the-teeth efficiency, all briskness and little pleasure. Sometimes that's the best we can manage, but to others we want to feel not like a postmodern, post feminist, overstretched modern woman but, rather, a domestic goddess, trailing nutmeggy fumes of baking pie in our languorous wake. So what I'm talking about is not being a domestic goddess, exactly, but feeling like one." (Domestic Goddess)

ON COOKING

"Cooking is not about just joining the dots, following one recipe slavishly and then moving on to the next. It's about developing an understanding of food, a sense of assurance in the kitchen, about the simple desire to make yourself something to eat. And in cooking, as in writing, you must please yourself to please others. Strangely it can take enormous confidence to trust your own palate, follow your own instincts. Without habit, which itself is just trial and error, this can be harder than following the most elaborate of recipes. But it's what works, what's important." ([How To Eat](#))

FOLLOWING RECIPES

"I'm not interested in barking instructions: this isn't meant to be a monologue. As I've said before, I want to be there in the kitchen with you; my words are merely my side of the conversation I imagine we might have." ([Nigella Bites](#))

BRINGING YOUR PERSONALITY TO COOKING

"Cooking is not just about applying heat, procedure, method, but about transformation of a more intimate kind; none of us cooks without bringing our own character to bear on the food in front of us. Just as I've toyed with my recipes, fiddled with them to become my food, so I expect them to be remodelled in your own kitchen." ([Forever Summer](#))





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GALLERY 2002

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1 - *MORO: THE COOKBOOK*

By Sam Clark
Publisher: Ebury, 2001



2 - *CLASSIC FOOD OF NORTHERN ITALY*

By Anna del Conte



3 - *JANE GRIGSON'S VEGETABLE BOOK*

By Jane Grigson



4 - *ROAST CHICKEN AND OTHER STORIES*

By Simon Hopkinson with Lindsay Bareham



5 - *A NEW BOOK OF MIDDLE EASTERN FOOD*

By Claudia Roden

6 - *ASIAN NOODLES*

by Nina Symonds

7 - *ENTERTAINING ALL'ITALIANA*

by Anna del Conte

8 - *SECRETS FROM AN ITALIAN KITCHEN*

by Anna del Conte

9 - *THE BAKING BOOK*

by Linda Collister and Anthony Blake

10 - *THE COOK'S COMPANION*

by Stephanie Alexander

If you are interested in any of Nigella's own books, please check out the Channel 4 shop for [Nigella Bites](#) and [How to Eat](#).





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STARTERS AND LIGHT MEALS

[Insalata Di Rinforzo](#) | [Lentil/Chestnut Soup](#) | [Hot Spiced Prawns](#) | [Panchiporan Aloo](#)

Insalata Di Rinforzo

Serves 8

Ingredients:

4 tablespoons Maldon salt
1 head cauliflower cut into florets
700ml white wine vinegar
1 teaspoon fennel seeds
4 cloves garlic peeled and left whole
3 stalks celery cut on a diagonal into 2cm pieces
300g pickling onions peeled after soaking in hot water
2 yellow peppers, seeded and cut into 2cm thick strips
2 red peppers, seeded and cut into 2cm thick strips
1 fennel bulb, sliced
6 red chillies left whole
200g pitted olives, black, green or a mixture
2 tablespoons capers
bunch of flat leaf parsley chopped

To dress as a salad:

50ml white wine vinegar
100ml extra virgin olive oil
salt and pepper

For preserving as a pickle:

bottle of white wine vinegar
bottle of olive oil (not extra virgin)

Boil 4 litres of water in a large saucepan.

Add 2 tablespoons of salt and the cauliflower florets and cook for 5-8 minutes.

Remove florets and plunge into bowl of iced water.

Pour out half of the boiling water, then add 700ml of white wine vinegar, remaining salt, the teaspoon of fennel seeds and the garlic cloves.

Bring the pan back to the boil and add the celery, onions, peppers, fennel, and whole chillies and cook everything for about 10 minutes until tender.

Refresh the vegetables in the same way, plunging them into iced water. When they are cold drain them along with the cauliflower florets.

In a large bowl, mix the cauliflower and other vegetables along with the garlic, olives and capers.

Whisk together the oil and vinegar and pour over the pickled



salad, season with salt and pepper and sprinkle over the chopped parsley. Combine everything really well (use your hands).

At this point you have a pickled vegetable salad which serves 8 generously. Or you can stuff everything into 4 x 1 litre wide necked sterilised Kilner jars and pour in a 50/50 mixture of olive oil and vinegar to cover the vegetables.

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Lentil and Chestnut Soup

Serves 4-6

Ingredients:

250g red lentils
225g cooked chestnuts or 240g tin of
Clement Faugier vacuum packed chestnuts
1.5 litres vegetable stock
1 stick celery
1 carrot
1 small onion
1 leek
2 tablespoons olive oil/goose fat/butter
fresh parsley, chopped
150ml double cream

Finely chop the onion, leek, carrot and celery.

Heat the oil in a pan, add the chopped vegetables and let sweat and soften in the fat.

Add the lentils and stir, then add the stock. Bring to the boil and simmer until lentils are very soft (about 30 minutes).

Add the chestnuts and simmer for a further 20 minutes or so.

Liquidise until smooth adding as much water as you need.

Whenever you want to serve it reheat, and sprinkle each full bowl of soup with parsley and lace with cream.

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Hot Spiced Prawns

Serves 6-8

Ingredients:

1kg shelled raw tiger prawns
3 tablespoons olive oil
3 spring onions cut into 3 and sliced into strips
2 fat cloves of garlic peeled and sliced thinly
1cm ginger peeled, sliced thinly and cut into strips
75ml Tio Pepe sherry
Maldon salt to taste

Warm the oil in a large wide saucepan, and throw in the spring onions, garlic and ginger.

Stir everything around vigorously until the onions begin to wilt, and then toss in the prawns stirring again.

Cover the pan and let everything cook for about five minutes and then remove the lid and pour in the sherry.

Stir again and then cover the pan until the prawns are cooked through and no longer glassy in the middle.

Taste to test and add a sprinkling of salt if you need it.

Pour into a large shallow bowl making sure you don't lose all the bits of onion, garlic and ginger and take immediately to the table.

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Panchiporan Aloo

Ingredients:

900g potatoes peeled
vegetable oil
half teaspoon turmeric
half teaspoon red chilli powder
half teaspoon fenugreek seeds
half teaspoon nigella seeds
half teaspoon black mustard seeds
half teaspoon cumin seeds
half teaspoon fennel seeds
3-4 tablespoons freshly chopped coriander

Slice the potatoes into half to 1cm rounds, then dice these further into small, evenly-sized cubes.

Using a non-stick pan, take minimum amount of oil needed and fry the cubed potatoes over a high heat to start with and then turn the heat down and cover.

When the potatoes are a little more than half done, add the turmeric, red chilli powder and some salt, closely followed by the whole spices, mixed together.

Stir to combine and put the lid back on once again. When the potatoes are nearly ready, take the lid off, turn the heat up and stir-fry to enable any excess liquid to evaporate.

Garnish with fresh coriander and serve with cold meats or fried eggs.

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CHRISTMAS BITES



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Christmas Shepherd's Pie, aka Rudolph Pie

Serves 14-16

Ingredients:

50g dried porcini
3 - 5 tablespoons olive oil
4 onions chopped
4 carrots chopped
4 cloves of garlic peeled and minced
500g button mushrooms, quartered
1kg minced venison
1kg minced pork
2 tablebspoons flour
6 tablespoons Marsala
2 tins chopped tomatoes
2 tablespoons tomato puree diluted in 125ml water
Worcestershire sauce to taste

Topping:

4kg potatoes
1500g parsnips (about 8 medium-sized)
125ml full-fat milk
125g butter, plus more to dot on the top
nutmeg
sprinkle of Worcestershire sauce

Pour 500ml of near-boiling water over the porcini mushrooms and leave to steep.

Warm oil into very large thick bottomed pan and add the chopped onions, carrots and minced garlic. Cook stirring for about 10 minutes, sprinkling with the salt if the vegetables look as if they may burn.

Drain the porcini, reserving the soaking liquid, chop coarsely and add with the button mushrooms to the vegetable mixture. After about 5 minutes tip the whole lot out to brown the meat.

Add a little more oil to the pan then tip in the minced meats, breaking them up with a wooden spoon. Stir for about five minutes until the rawness has left them a bit, add salt - unstintingly - and then return the vegetable mixture to the pan.

Stir in the flour and add the mushroom-soaking liquid, tinned tomatoes, diluted puree, Marsala and a few drops of Worcestershire sauce.

Stir well, cover partly with a lid and reduce heat so that the mince bubbles gently, for about 40 minutes to an hour.



Meanwhile boil the potatoes in a large pan of salted water until they are nearly ready and then add the parsnips which have been peeled and cut into chunks.

Boil until they are cooked to easily mashable tenderness, then drain and allow to dry slightly.

Warm the milk and melt the butter in the heat of the potato-pan. Rice or mash the potatoes and parsnips straight into this, grate in some fresh nutmeg and add salt to taste.

Put the mince into a large dish approximately 37cm x 32cm, then dollop the potato mash on top, spreading with a spatula, taking care to seal the edges to prevent the meat below from bubbling up in the oven.

Fork lines over the top, then dot with butter and sprinkle with Worcestershire sauce.

If you're cooking this straight away, about 10 minutes in a 225C oven should be enough to make it piping hot and crisply golden on top. If cooking from cold, about an hour in a 190C/Gas 5 oven should do it.

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Pasta with Walnut Sauce

Serves 8-10

Ingredients:

175g shelled walnuts (about 350g unshelled weight)
half a clove of garlic minced
1 slice of Granary bread (crusts removed)
150ml full fat milk
25g grated parmesan
3-4 tablespoons olive oil (Ligurian)
salt and pepper
1kg any flat short pasta

Put a large saucepan of water on to boil, and toast the walnuts in a dry frying pan until they begin to make a nutty aroma.

Put the bread in a bowl and cover with the milk.

Put 150g walnuts into a blender along with the minced garlic, bread soaked in milk, and the parmesan cheese.

Blend everything on the mouli setting until it turns smooth and creamy, then pour in the oil and season well with salt and pepper before blending again.

Pour or scrape into a bowl, add pasta to boiling water with salt and cook for the required amount of time.

Reserve a cup of pasta cooking liquid and then drain the pasta, but put it in to a large bowl while it's still dripping slightly with water.

Sprinkle a little olive oil over the pasta to prevent it sticking together, and then add the walnut sauce working it through (splash in a little pasta cooking liquid to make the sauce less thick if needed).

Roughly chop the remaining walnuts and toss them over the top along with some more parmesan cheese and the chopped parsley.

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Tagliata with Rosemary and Garlic Potatoes

Serves 6-8

Ingredients:

For the Tagliata

4cm thick slice of beef (cut from along the rump)
1 garlic clove, crushed
½ onion (cut in two)
100ml olive oil
red wine vinegar
peppercorns

Put the beef into a large freezer bag with the oil, garlic, onion, vinegar (just a splash) and a few bruised peppercorns.

Tie bag and leave in fridge for 12 hours or leave it out of fridge for 2-3 hours. If you are short of time do it for just half an hour as it will make a difference.

Let the steak get to room temperature before cooking it on a griddle for about 5 minutes a side (or cook in a hot oven for about 15 minutes).

Remove steak, let stand for 10 mins and then carve thinly crosswise.

Serve on a plate lined with rocket leaves with lemon quarters to squeeze over the meat as you eat.

For the potatoes.

1200g - 1600g main crop potatoes
Garlic infused oil
Fresh rosemary sprigs

Wash, but don't peel the potatoes and cut into about 1cm cubes, toss into a large freezer bag with the oil and then turn into an oven tray.

Tuck some torn up rosemary sprigs and roast for an hour or so at 200C/Gas 6/375F.

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Talking Turkey

Here's the Christmas bonus: Top turkey tips straight from Nigella and exclusive to this site:

Don't be alarmed by the shortness of the cooking time below. Do remember to take the turkey out of the fridge in good time; it should be at room temperature when it goes in the oven.

To roast the turkey:

Preheat the oven to 200C/Gas 6 and keep it at this temperature for the first 30 minutes. Then turn it down to 180C/Gas 4.

Put it breast down in the roasting tray: the only fat deposits in a turkey are in the back and this allows them to percolate

through the breast meat as it cooks; it makes for the tenderest possible, succulent meat. Turn it the right way up for the last half hour of cooking to brown.

Cooking times:

For the following weights of turkey you need to cook it for these times. Remember when stuffing the bird to weigh the stuffings before adding them to the turkey as you'll need to count them in the total cooking time.

Weight	Time
2.25kg	1 1/2 hours
4.5 kg	2 hours
6.75 kg	2 3/4 hours
9kg	3 1/2 hours
11.5kg	4 1/2 hours

It is not possible to give one serve-all timing based on per kilo; this time decreases as the weight of the bird increases. But if you are buying a true Bronze turkey as recommended (and these times are for this superior bird) you can consult those who are selling it to you.

To see for yourself that the turkey is ready, poke a skewer or fork where the meat is thickest - behind the knee joint of the thigh - and if it is cooked the juices will run clear.

And one final reminder - if you are using the times above ALWAYS cook the turkey from room temperature, not straight from the fridge.

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DESSERTS

[Cranberry and Orange Pudding](#) | [Pomegranate Meringue Mountain](#) | [Snowflecked Brownies](#)

Cranberry and Orange Pudding

Serves 4-6

Ingredients:

500g cranberries (fresh or frozen)
50g unsalted butter
3 tablespoons sugar (for the batter)
175g self-raising flour
half teaspoon baking powder
120g unsalted butter, melted
175g caster sugar
2 eggs beaten
few drops orange oil
30g flaked almonds
a sprinkling of demerara sugar

Preheat the oven to 160C/Gas 3/325F.

Melt the 50g of butter in a wide saucepan and add the 3 tablespoons of sugar and the cranberries. Cook over a fairly high heat until they begin to pop a bit.

Take the pan off the heat while you make the batter.

Combine the flour, baking powder and sugar in a large bowl and add the eggs, melted butter and orange oil.

Mix to a smooth batter and line the bottom of a 2 pint round pie dish and then cover with the cranberries, dot with the remaining half of the mixture not worrying too much if the cranberries are not covered completely.

Sprinkle over the flaked almonds and demerara sugar and bake in the oven for about 45 mins to an hour, by which time the top will be golden brown and set.

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Pomegranate Meringue Mountain

Serves 6

Ingredients:

1 packet of 8 individual meringue nests (Marks and Spencer for choice)
2-3 pomegranates
500ml double cream

Whip the cream until thick but still with a bit of soft flop



about it. Crumble in 7 of the meringues, not turning them into absolute dust - you need chunks for the texture.

Now squeeze in pomegranate seeds and a bit of juice, leaving half a pomegranate for later.

The best way to deseed a pomegranate is to halve the fruit and hold each half, cut side down, over the meringues and cream. Take a heavy wooden spoon and start thwacking the pomegranate; after a few goes the glorious red beads will rain down.

When you've got most of the seeds out, press the now pretty well emptied halves together in your hands to squeeze out some juice. The seeds are the main thing, though: too much juice and the cream will turn too liquid to hold its shape.

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Snow Flecked Brownies

Makes approximately squares.

Ingredients:

375g best quality dark chocolate
375g unsalted butter at room temperature at least
1 tablespoon real vanilla extract
6 eggs
350g sugar
1 teaspoon salt
225g plain flour
250g white chocolate buttons, preferably Montgomery Moore, or just chop same amount of good white chocolate
tin measuring approx 33cm x 23cm x 5.5cm

Preheat the oven to 180C/Gas 4/350F.

Line your brownie pan base and sides.

Melt the butter and dark chocolate together in a large heavy based pan.

In a bowl or wide mouthed large measuring jug, beat the eggs with the sugar and vanilla.

Measure the flour into another bowl and add the salt.

When the chocolate mixture has melted let it cool a bit before beating in the eggs and sugar, and then the flour.

Finally fold in the white chocolate buttons. Beat to combine smoothly and then scrape out of the saucepan into the lined pan. Bake for about 25 mins.

The brownies are ready, when the top is dried to a paler brown speckle, but the middle is dark and dense and gooey still; remember that they will continue to cook as they cool.

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[Double Potato & Halloumi Bake](#) | [Lemon Risotto](#)

DOUBLE POTATO & HALLOUMI BAKE

Nigella: *"I first made this for a piece I was writing for Vogue on the mood- enhancing properties of carbohydrates... It's a simple idea, and as simple to execute. What's more, there's a balance between the components: bland and sweet potatoes, almost caramelised onion and garlic, more juicy sweetness with the peppers and then the uncompromising plain saltiness of the halloumi (which you should be able to get easily in a supermarket) - that seems to add the eater's equilibrium in turn. You could substitute feta, or do without the cheese altogether if you wanted to serve this as a side dish to roast chicken, say, but in which case be generous with the Malden salt once the bake comes out of the oven..."*



This recipe was taken from 'Nigella Bites'. You can buy this in the [Channel 4 shop](#).

Ingredients:

- 1 large sweet potato, the orange-fleshed American variety
- 1 large Desiree potato or other red/firm potato
- 1 red onion
- 1 yellow pepper
- 1 red pepper
- half a head of garlic
- 4 tbsps olive oil
- black pepper
- 125g halloumi cheese, sliced as thinly as you can
- Oven proof baking dish, 25 x 15cm

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 200C/ gas mark 6.
Cut the sweet potato into rough 4 cm cubes and the Desiree slightly smaller (2.5cm) as the sweet potato will cook more quickly. Halve the red onion then cut the half into 4-6 segments, discarding any tough outer skin. De-seed the peppers and cut into 2.5 cm squares, and separate the cloves of garlic. Put everything into a large roasting tin or whatever you want to use (it should be big, otherwise use two dishes) and, using your hands, give the vegetables a good coating of olive oil. Season with black pepper, but no salt as the cheese will make it salty (and anyway, the salt will make water leech out). Cook for 45 minutes, by which time the vegetables should be cooked through and here and there tinged with brown. You'll need to turn the oven up to maximum, or light the grill for the endgame: so place the thinly sliced cheese on top of the bake, and put it back in the very hot oven or under the grill until the cheese has melted and turned slightly brown on top, about 5-10 minutes. Serve straight out of the roasting tin.

Serves 2-3.

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LEMON RISOTTO

Nigella: *"This is comfort food on so many levels. For one, risotto has to be one of the most comforting things to eat. What's more, although everyone goes on about the finickiness and crucial fine-tuning involved, I find risotto immensely comforting to make... There is a more personal reason why this is comforting for me. The recipe comes from Anna del Conte (from her Secrets of an Italian Kitchen to be exact) and she, beyond any doubt the best Italian foodwriter around, is the person I turn to for bolstering and solace. Just reading her books provides instant, essential nourishment."*

Ingredients:

- 2 shallots
- 1 stick of celery
- 60g unsalted butter
- 1 tbspn olive oil
- 300g risotto rice, preferably Vialone Nano
- 1 litre vegetable stock (I use Marigold stock powder)
- Zest and juice of 1/2 an unwaxed lemon
- Needles from 2 small sprigs of fresh rosemary, finely chopped * 1 egg yolk
- 60ml (4 tbspns) grated Parmesan, plus more to sprinkle
- 60ml (4 tbspns) double cream
- Malden salt to taste
- Good grating pepper, preferably white

Instructions:

Put the shallots and celery into a Magimix and blitz until they are a finely chopped mush. Heat half the butter, the oil and the shallot and celery mixture in a wide saucepan, and cook to soften the mixture for about 5 minutes making sure it doesn't catch. Mix in the rice, stirring to give it a good coating of oil and butter. Meanwhile, heat the stock in another saucepan and keep it at simmering point.

Pour in a ladle full of the stock into the rice and keep stirring until the stock is absorbed. Then add another ladle full and stir again, continue doing this until the rice is al dente. You may not need all of the stock, equally, you may need to add hot water from the kettle.

Mix the lemon zest and the rosemary into the risotto, and in a small bowl beat the egg yolk, lemon juice, Parmesan, cream and pepper.

When the risotto is ready - when the rice is no longer chalky but still has some bite - take it off the heat and add the bowl of eggy lemony mixture, and the remaining butter and salt to taste. Serve with more grated Parmesan if you wish, check the seasoning and dive in.

Serves 2.

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[Lamb-Shank Stew](#) | [Couscous](#)

LAMB-SHANK STEW

Nigella: *"Don't let the word stew put you off. Yes, I know it's crippled with connotations of school-dinner gristle and gluey-gravied mess, but the lamb shanks here are anything but that. Of course, you could use shoulder, cut into greed-satisfying chunks, and it still wouldn't be compromise, but the bone in the shank gives such rounded richness of flavour and there's something so unpretentiously satisfying about the great meaty hunkiness of it on the plate. Since supermarkets now routinely stock (or will order in) lamb shanks, and since they're both meaty and cheap, it makes sense to seek them out for this."*

As with all stews, this is even better made in advance and reheated; for me, this only makes things easier. The couscous, however, needs to be made last minute."

Ingredients:

- 6 tbsps ground nut or vegetable oil
- 8 Lamb shanks
- 2 onions
- 4 cloves of garlic
- sprinkling of salt
- 1 tbspn turmeric
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 1 dried red chilli pepper, crumbled, or quarter teasp dried chilli flakes * 2 tsps cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp freshly grated nutmeg
- black pepper
- 3 tbsps honey
- 1 tbspn soy sauce
- 3 tbsps Marsala
- 6 tbsps red lentils

to serve:

- 3 tbsps chopped pistachios, chopped blanched almonds or a mixture of both

Instructions:

Put 3 tablespoons of the oil into a very large, wide, heavy-bottomed pan and warm over medium heat. Brown the lamb shanks, in batches, in the pan and then remove to a roasting tin or whatever else you've got to hand to sit them in.

Peel the onions and garlic and process in a food processor or chop them finely by hand. Add the remaining oil to the pan, and fry the onion-garlic mush until soft, sprinkling salt over to stop it catching.

Stir in the turmeric, ground ginger, chilli, cinnamon and nutmeg, and season with some freshly ground pepper. Stir again, adding the honey, soy sauce and Marsala. Put the



This recipe was taken from 'Nigella Bites'. You can buy this in the [Channel 4 shop](#).

shanks back in the pan, add cold water almost to cover, bring to the boil then put a lid on the pan, lower the heat and simmer gently for 1 to 1 and a half hours or until the meat is tender.

Add the red lentils and cook for about 20 minutes longer without a lid, until the lentils have softened into the sauce, and the juices have reduced and thickened slightly. Check for seasoning.

Toast the nuts by heating them for a few minutes in a dry frying pan, and sprinkle onto the lamb as you serve it.

Serves 6

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COUSCOUS

Nigella: "The lamb shanks can be cooked in advance: this, needs to be done at the last minute. But relax, it's a low-effort undertaking. If you don't own a couscoussier (and there's no reason why you should) just steam these grains above boiling water in an ordinary vegetable steamer. Of course it's possible to cook couscous just by steeping it in boiling water (and check packet instructions for directions) but I can't honestly tell you it will make them as fluffily light.

Otherwise, with this aromatic, sauce-rich stew, just serve plain rice instead - or a bowlful of buttery mash, of half potatoes, half parsnips, well seasoned and spiced with mace."

Ingredients:

- 500g couscous
- 2 tps salt
- 4 cardamom pods
- approx 25g unsalted butter in two slices
- 25g flaked almonds
- 50g pinenuts
- 25g pistachios

Instructions:

Fill the bottom of a steamer, or base of a couscoussier should you possess one, with water and bring to the boil. When it looks like it's almost ready to boil, fill the kettle and put it on, then empty the couscous into a glass bowl, add the salt, crush in the cardamom and mix with your fingers, then pour over a litre of boiling water from the kettle and place a plate on top of the bowl. Leave to stand for 5 minutes, then drain and empty into the steamer or couscoussier top and sit this on top of the boiling water beneath. Add the slices of butter on top of the couscous then clamp on the lid and let steam for 7-10 minutes, by which time the couscous should be tenderly cooked and the butter melting. (You can do this a simpler way, if you prefer, by just steeping the couscous in the boiling water for 10-15 minutes, but the grains will be more dense and more likely to clump. It's not disastrous, however, and you must decide what you're prepared to do.)

Meanwhile, toast the almonds by frying them in a dry pan till fragrant and golden, remove them to a plate then do the same to the pinenuts. Chop the pistachios. Once the couscous is cooked, tip into a bowl, fork through (and always use a fork for mixing or fluffing up couscous; a spoon will crush it and turn it stodgy), sprinkling in the almonds and pine nuts as you do so (and taste for seasoning at the same time, too). Now fork in most of the pistachios, and sprinkle those that remain lightly on top.

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TV DINNERS

[Pumpkin & Seafood Curry](#) | [Bitter Orange Icecream](#)

PUMPKIN & SEAFOOD CURRY

Nigella: *"I use the term 'TV dinners' loosely. The recipes aren't written just with sofabound slumping in mind. It's a good idea to have something up your sleeve that you can cook quickly, and simply, when you've got friends coming over to supper midweek after work. This is that something. Don't let the length of the list of ingredients put you off. You really could go to the supermarket at lunchtime and buy everything you need. What's more, most of it keeps: salmon, raw prawns, lime leaves and lemongrass in the deep-freeze (and all but the salmon can be used from frozen); curry paste in the fridge; the coconut milk, fish sauce, fish stock concentrate and turmeric in the cupboard. In other words, one shopping expedition, many curries."*



This recipe was taken from 'Nigella Bites'. You can buy this in the [Channel 4 shop](#).

Ingredients:

- 400ml tin coconut milk
- 1-2 tbsps yellow (or red) Thai curry paste
- 350ml fish stock (I use boiling water and a slug of Benedicta Touch of Taste Concentrated fish bouillon; cubes would do)
- 3 tbsps fish sauce
- 2 tbsps palm sugar or caster sugar
- 3 lemon grass stalks each cut into three and bruised with the flat of a knife
- 3 lime leaves de stalked and cut into strips
- half tsp tumeric
- 1 kg pumpkin (or butternut squash) peeled and cut into large bite- sized chunks
- 500g salmon fillet, preferably organic, skinned and cut into large bite- sized chunks
- 500g peeled raw prawns
- pak choi or any other green vegetables of your choice
- juice of half-1 lime
- small bunch of coriander chopped, to serve

Instructions:

Skim the thick creamy top off the tin of coconut milk and put it, over medium heat, into a large saucepan or casserole with the curry paste. Let it sizzle and, using a fork, whisk or wooden spoon, beat milk and paste together until combined. Still beating, gently, add the rest of the coconut milk, fish stock, fish sauce, sugar, lemongrass, lime leaves and tumeric. Bring to a boil and then add the pumpkin. Cook on a fast simmer until the pumpkin is tender, about 15 minutes, although different sorts of pumpkins can vary enormously in the time they take to cook; some squash take as little as 5 minutes.

As I mentioned, you can cook the curry up till this part in advance, maybe leaving the pumpkin with still a tiny bit of bite to it (it will soften and cook as the pan cools). Either way, when you're about 5 minutes away from wanting to eat, get ready to cook the seafood.

So, to the robustly simmering pan, add the salmon and prawns (if you're using the prawns from frozen they'll need to go in before the salmon). When the salmon and prawns have cooked through, which shouldn't take more than 3-4 minutes, stir in the green veg you're using - sliced, chopped or shredded as suits - and tamp down with a wooden spoon. When the pak choi is wilted, squeeze in the juice of half a lime, stir and taste and then add the juice of the remaining half if you feel it needs it. Take the pan off the heat or decant the curry into a large bowl, and sprinkle over the coriander; the point is the coriander goes in just before serving. Serve with more chopped coriander, for people to add to their own bowls as they eat, and some plain Thai or basmati rice.

Serves 4 -6

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BITTER ORANGE ICE CREAM

Nigella: "I know that suggesting homemade icecream for an easy after-work supper makes me sound as if I'm going into deranged superwoman overdrive, but may I put the case for the defence?

All you do to make this is zest and juice some fruit, add icing sugar and cream, whisk and freeze. This requires no stirring or churning and it tastes unlike anything you could buy. So if you've got friends coming over for the curry, above, you can serve this for pudding to amazed admiration without giving yourself anything approaching a hard time. I use my KitchenAid for this, but a cheap handheld electric mixer would do fine; and frankly, a handwhisk wouldn't kill you."

Ingredients:

- 3 Seville oranges or 1 eating orange and 2 limes
- 175g icing sugar
- large pot (584 ml) double cream
- wafers to serve (optional)

Instructions:

If using Seville oranges, grate the zest of two of them. Squeeze the juice of all 3 and pour into a bowl with the zest and sugar. If going for the sweet- orange and lime option, grate the zest of the orange and one of the limes, juice them and add to the sugar as before. Stir to dissolve the sugar and add the double cream.

Whip everything until it holds soft peaks, and then turn into a shallow airtight container (of approximately 2 litres) with a lid. Cover and freeze until firm (from 3-5 hours). Remove to ripen for 15-20 minutes (or 30-40 in the fridge) before eating.

Serve in a bowl, in cones, with wafers - however you like.

Serves 6.

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[Masala Omlette](#) | [Asian Spiced Kedgerree](#)

MASALA OMLETTE

Nigella: *"Maybe I should come clean here. Although this is a Keralan dish, I have never, in fact, been to Kerala. But the book's designer had just come back from there when we did the pictures for this book and cooked it for us one day. To eat is to be convinced and the omlette found its way into the TV programme. One of the advantages is that it's an unusual thing to eat for breakfast but easy to make, and what's more, suitable to be cooked for yourself alone. Feel free to add as well as subtract ingredients: grated ginger is good, as is chopped fresh mint and, indeed, dried. You can eat this, flat on the plate, with a knife and fork, or roll it up inside a chapati that you've just warmed through in the microwave. And don't tell them in Kerala, but I like this with a splodge of brown sauce, too."*

Ingredients:

- 1 tsp vegetable oil
- 1 spring onion sliced finely
- 1-2 chillies to taste, red or green
- 1 clove garlic, microplaned or finely chopped
- quarter tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 2 eggs, beaten
- freshly chopped coriander for sprinkling over
- chapatis to eat with, if you feel like it

Instructions:

Preheat the grill.

Heat the oil in a non-stick frying pan 20-27cm in diameter and fry the spring onion, chilli and turmeric until soft. Add the other spices and fry for another minute stirring occasional, then add the beaten eggs, swirling the pan to help the eggs set underneath.

When the omelette is nearly set, flash it under a hot grill to finish it off, and serve with fresh coriander and chapattis.

Serves 1

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ASIAN-SPICED KEDGEREE

Nigella: *"Kedgerree started off life, in India, as a dish of lentils and rice and then, translated into the kitchens of what could be called the Anglo-Indian Ascendancy, became an eggy, golden pile of rice punctuated with slabby chunks of smoked haddock. When I was a child it still remained as a comforting brunch dish still part of the homely repertoire of*



This recipe was taken from 'Nigella Bites'. You can buy this in the [Channel 4 shop](#).

the normal English cook. Here, I've fiddled with it some more, replacing the earthier Indian flavours with the sharper ones of Thailand and SouthEast Asia and trading the strident tones of the smoked haddock in for gentle, fleshy salmon, beautifully coral against the turmeric-stained gold of the rice."

Ingredients:

- 500ml cold water for poaching the fish
- 2 lime leaves torn into pieces
- 4 salmon fillets (approx 3cm thick) preferably organic, skinned (about 750g in total)
- 45g unsalted butter
- 1 tsp oil
- 1 onion chopped finely
- half tsp ground coriander
- half tsp ground cumin
- half tsp tumeric
- 225g basmati rice
- 3 hard-boiled eggs quartered
- 3 tbsps chopped coriander, plus more for sprinkling
- juice and zest of a lime plus more lime segments to serve
- Fish sauce (nam pla) to taste

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 220C/gas mark 7. This is just because the easiest way to poach the salmon for this is to do it in the oven. So: pour the water into a roasting dish, add the lime leaves and then the salmon. Cover the dish with foil, put in the oven and cook for about 15 minutes, by which time the salmon should be cooked till tender. Remove the dish from the oven and drain the liquid off into a jug. Keep the fish warm, just by replacing the foil on the dish.

Melt the butter in a wide heavy saucepan that has a tight-fitting lid, and add the oil to stop the butter burning. Soften the onion in the pan and add the spices, then keep cooking till the onion is slightly translucent and suffused with the soft perfume of the spices. Add the rice and stir with a wooden spoon so that it's all well coated. There's not enough onion to give a heavy coating: just make sure the rice is fragrantly slicked.

Pour in the reserved liquid from the jug - about 500ml - and stir before covering with a lid and cooking gently for about 15 minutes. If your stove is vociferous you may need a heat-diffuser.

At the end of the cooking time, when the rice is tender and has lost all chalkiness, turn off the heat, remove the lid, cover with a tea towel and then replace the lid. This will help absorb any extra moisture from the rice. It also is the best way to let the rice stand without getting claggy or cold, which is useful when you've got a few friends and a few dishes to keep your eye on.

Just before you want to eat, drain off any extra liquid that's collected in the dish with the salmon, then flake the fish with a fork. Add to it the rice, eggs, coriander, lime juice and a drop or two of fish sauce. Stir gently to mix - I use a couple of wooden paddles or spatulas - and taste to see if you want any more lime juice or fish sauce. Sprinkle over the zest from the two juiced halves of the lime and serve. I love it served just as it is in the roasting dish, but if you want to, and I often do (consistency is a requirement of a recipe but not a cook) decant into a large plate surrounded with lime segments before you add the lime zest, then add the zest and a small handful of freshly chopped coriander.

This is one of those rare dishes that manages to be comforting and light at the same time. And - should you have leftovers, which I wouldn't bank on - it's heavenly

eaten, as all leftovers demand to be, standing up, straight from the fridge.

Serves 6

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SLOW COOK WEEKEND

[Lamb Salad With Mint & Pomegranate](#) | [Turkish Delight Syllabub](#)

WARM SHREDDED LAMB SALAD WITH MINT AND POMEGRANATE

Nigella: *"The virtue of this is that you can cook the lamb overnight, which means all you need to do is shred the meat, dress it and make the salads at lunchtime itself. Or put it in the oven at a slightly higher temperature, but still unfrenetically low, in the morning and fiddle about as people arrive. You do need to serve the lamb salad warm, rather than cold (a bit of fat provides flavoursome lubrication at anything above room temperature; once cold we're talking congealed waxy whiteness - not such an attractive proposition) but if you keep the lamb tented with foil once it's out of the oven - should you need to hold it for longer than an hour or two - that shouldn't pose problems."*

If it's not the pomegranate season you have a choice: either use pomegranate molasses (a tablespoonful or so, diluted with an equal amount of water) which you can get at some supermarkets now, or just use lemon juice and maybe even a little very finely grated zest."

Ingredients:

- 1 shoulder of lamb (approx 2.5 kilograms)
- 4 shallots halved but not peeled
- 6 cloves garlic left whole
- 1 carrot peeled and halved
- malden salt
- 500ml boiling water
- small handful freshly chopped mint
- 1 pomegranate

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 140C/ gas mark 1.

On the hob, brown the lamb, fat side down, in a large roasting tin. Remove when nicely browned in the middle (you won't get much more than this) and set aside while you fry the vegetables briefly. Just tip them into the pan - you won't need to add any more fat - and cook them, sprinkled with salt, gently for a couple of minutes. Pour the water over and then replace the lamb, this time fat side up. Let the liquid in the pan come to a bubble, then tent with foil and put in the preheated oven.

Now just leave it there while you sleep. I find that if I put the lamb in before I go to bed, it's perfect by lunchtime the next day. But the point is, at this temperature, nothing's going to go wrong with the lamb if you cook it for a little less or a little more.

If you want to cook the lamb the day you're going to eat it, heat the oven to 170C/ gas mark 3 and give it 5 hours or so.



This recipe was taken from 'Nigella Bites'. You can buy this in the [Channel 4 shop](#).

The point is to find a way of cooking that suits you: you know what sort of pottering relaxes you and what makes you feel constrained; how much time you've got, and how you want to use it. Don't let the food, the kitchen or the imagined expectations of other people bully you.

With that homily over, about an hour before you want to eat, remove the lamb from the tin to a large plate or carving board; not that it needs carving: the deal here is that it's unfashionably overcooked, falling to tender shreds at the touch of a fork. This is the best way to deal with shoulder of lamb: it's cheaper than leg, and the flavour is deeper, better, truer, but even good carvers, which I most definitely am not, can get unstuck trying to slice it.

I get on with the peppers while the lamb's sitting meekly, but you could equally well have done this earlier, too (and see below for instructions). But to finish the lamb salad, simply pull it to pieces with a couple forks on a large plate. Sprinkle with more Malden salt and some freshly chopped mint, then cut the pomegranate in half and dot with the seeds from one of the halves. This is easily done; there's a simple trick, which means you never have to think of winking out the jewelled pips with a safety pin ever again. Simply hold the pomegranate half above the plate, take a wooden spoon and start bashing the curved skin side with it. Nothing will happen for a few seconds, but have faith. In a short while the red glassy, juicy beads will start raining down.

Take the other half and squeeze the preposterously pink juices over the warm shredded meat. Take to the table and serve.

What I do with the leftovers is warm a pitta bread in the microwave, and then spread it with a greedy dollop of hummous, then take the chill off the fridged lamb in the microwave too (and see notes on cold fat, above) and stuff the already gooey pitta with it. Add freshly chopped mint, black pepper and whatever else you like; raw, finely chopped red onion goes dangerously well.

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TURKISH DELIGHT SYLLABUB

Nigella: *"This hasn't got the temple-aching sweetness of Turkish Delight, nor its palate-cleaving glutinousness, but rather it is a cloud-light spoon-pudding version which attempts to catch its aromatic essence - perfect after the lamb and pomegranate salad above. That it requires no cooking, merely some pouring and whisking doesn't hurt either."*

The quantities below make enough syllabub to fill, billowingly, eight 150-ml glasses; I give spoon measures before metric ones, just because it makes the whole operation more relaxed if you dispense with weighing and measuring. The vague amount of cream specified is just meant to indicate one of those old-pint tubs which hasn't been properly made metric, and therefore is a strange measurement."

Ingredients:

- 12 tablespoons (approx 175ml) Cointreau
- juice of 2 lemons
- 8 tablespoons (approx 125g) caster sugar
- just under 600ml double cream
- 2 tablespoons rosewater
- 2 tablespoons orange flower water
- 2 tablespoons pistacchios finely chopped

Instructions:

Combine the Cointreau, lemon juice and sugar in a large bowl (I use the bowl of my KitchenAid mixer) and stir to dissolve the sugar, or as good as. Slowly stir in the cream then get whisking. As I said, I use my freestanding mixer for this, but if you haven't got one, don't worry - but I would then advise a hand-held electric mixer. This takes ages to thicken and doing it by hand will drive you demented with tedium and impatience. Or it would me.

When the cream's fairly thick, but still not thick enough to hold its shape, dribble in the flower waters and then keep whisking until you have a creamy mixture that's light and airy but able to form soft peaks. I always think of syllabub as occupying some notional territory between solid and liquid; you're aiming, as you whisk, for what Jane Grigson called 'bulky whiteness'. Whatever: better slightly too runny than slightly too thick, so proceed carefully, but don't get anxious about it.

Spoon the syllabub in airy dollops into small glasses, letting the mixture billow up above the rim of the glass, and scatter finely chopped pistachios on top. In *How to Eat*, there's a recipe for pistachio crescents which would be fabulous dunked into and eaten with this. But only if you feel like it: the cool, fool-like smoothness of this is perfect as it is.

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[Hot and Sour Soup](#) | [Ginger-Hot Duck Salad](#)

HOT AND SOUR SOUP

Nigella: *"I know that for some people, nothing feels more restoring than something warm and unchallengingly bland but when it's succour and sustenance I need, it's spice that I want. This soup, tom yam-the culinary equivalent of Friar's Balsam, clears the tubes and brings fire to the jaded soul. And there's nothing like a bit of searing heat to push away any hungover seediness. It's good for those days when you're thick with cold, too."*

It's easy to throw together, as well: the chicken stock I make out of boiling water and bouillon concentrate, and the tom yam paste is sold now at most supermarkets, along with the other ingredients, too."

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 litres chicken stock
- 2 heaped tablespoon tom yam paste
- 4 kaffir lime leaves, finely chopped
- 1 stick lemon grass, tender inner part only, roughly chopped * juice of 1 lime
- 4 tabsps fish sauce
- 3 small fresh red or green chillies, finely chopped
- 1 tsp sugar
- 150g straw or button mushrooms, halved or quartered according to size
- 500g peeled raw prawns, thawed if frozen
- 5 small spring onions, cut into short lengths and then into strips * small bunch coriander, chopped

Instructions:

Heat the stock and tom yam paste in a decent sized saucepan with the lime leaves, lemon grass, lime-juice, fish sauce, chillies and sugar. Bring to the boil, add the mushrooms and simmer for a couple of minutes, then add the prawns and spring onions and cook for a further 2-3 minutes, or until the prawns are cooked but still tender. Sprinkle with a little coriander and put more on the table for people to add themselves as they want.

Serves 4-6

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GINGERY-HOT DUCK SALAD

Nigella: *"I don't buy into this anti-meat drive. Indeed, I am vehemently pro- protein. Nor am I fat-phobic, so I tend to leave the fatty layer of skin on the duck breast before I griddle (or fry) it, but remove it, before cooking, by all means if you have succumbed to the lure of the lean. And if that's the case, you'll pleased to learn that not one drop of*



This recipe was taken from 'Nigella Bites'. You can buy this in the [Channel 4 shop](#).

oil need go into the dressing. However, I often sprinkle a little toasted sesame oil over at the end, which is why I've still listed it in the ingredients. Your call.

The salad itself is a slight reworking of a Cambodian beef salad I often make; here the lime juice in the steeping-mixture (which turns into the dressing) is supplemented with orange juice (Asian evocations of duck a l'orange and all that) but in season, around January, use instead of this combination, the fragrantly acerbic juice of one seville orange."

Ingredients:

- 1 duck breast
- 2 tbsps fish sauce
- juice of half a lime and juice of half an orange or 1 Seville orange * 1 Cayenne chilli finely chopped
- 1cm ginger grated
- few drops sesame oil, (optional)
- 50g baby spinach, watercress, lambs lettuce or a mixture

Instructions:

Grill or fry the duck breast - fat side down, if not removed - until it's cooked to juicy pinkness.

Let it rest on a board, while you mix together the fish sauce, lime and orange juice (or just seville-orange juice), chilli, ginger and optional sesame oil together in a bowl.

Pour any juices that the duck has made into the bowl, and then carve the meat on the diagonal into thin slices. Toss the sliced duck into the bowl and stir everything well. Turn it out onto a serving plate covered with the salad leaves.

Serves 2

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[Ham In Coca-Cola](#) | [Sweetcorn Pudding](#)

HAM IN COCA-COLA

Nigella: *"This recipe is from How to Eat, with some rejigging (just because it's not in my nature to leave completely alone) and I don't apologise for reproducing, or rather recasting, it because I simply cannot urge you to try this strongly enough. The first time I made it, it was, to be frank, really just out of amused interest. I'd heard, and read, about this culinary tradition from the deep South, but wasn't expecting it, in all honesty, to be (in all honesty) good. The truth is it's magnificent, and makes converts of anyone who eats it. But, if you think about it, it's not surprising it should work: the sweet, spiky drink just infuses it with spirit of barbecue. I have to force myself to cook ham any other way now; though often I don't bothering with the glaze but just leave it for longer in the bubbling Coke instead."*

Ingredients:

- 2kg mild-cure gammon
- 1 onion peeled and cut in half
- 2 litre-bottle coke
- for the glaze
- handful cloves
- 1 heaped tablespoon black treacle
- 2 teasps English mustard powder
- 2 tablespoons demerara sugar

Instructions:

I find now that mild-cure gammon doesn't need soaking. If you know that you're dealing with a salty piece, then put it in a pan covered with cold water, bring to the boil then tip into a colander in the sink and start from here; otherwise, put the gammon in a pan, skin side down if it fits like that, add the onion then pour over the Coke. Bring to the boil, reduce to a good simmer, put the lid on, though not tightly, and cook for just under 2 1/2 hours. If your joint is larger or smaller work out timing by reckoning on an hour a kilo altogether, remembering that it's going to get a quick blast in the oven later. But do take into account that if the gammon's been in the fridge right up to the moment you cook it, you will have to give a good 15 or so minutes' extra so that the interior is properly cooked. Meanwhile preheat oven to 240C/gas mark 9.

When the ham's had its time (and ham it is now it's cooked, though it's true Americans call it ham from its uncooked state) take it out of the pan but DO NOT THROW AWAY THE COOKING LIQUID and let cool a little for ease of handling. (Indeed you can let it cool completely then finish off the cooking at some later stage if you want). Then remove skin, leaving a thin layer of fat. Score the fat with a sharp knife to make fairly large diamond

shapes, and stud each diamond with a clove. Then carefully spread the treacle over the bark-budded skin taking care not



This recipe was taken from 'Nigella Bites'. You can buy this in the [Channel 4 shop](#).

to dislodge the cloves. Then gently pat the mustard and sugar onto the sticky fat. Cook, in a foil lined roasting tin for approximately 10 minutes or till the glaze is burnished and bubbly.

Should you want to do the braising stage in advance and then let the ham cool, clove and glaze it and give it 30-40 minutes, from room temperature, at 180C/gas mark 4, turning up the heat towards the end if you think it needs it.

This is seriously fabulous with anything, but the eggily golden sweetcorn pudding that follows is perfect: ham and eggs southern style.

Serves 8

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SWEETCORN PUDDING

Nigella: *"This isn't pudding as in desert, but pudding as in rich, heavy, airless soufflé. I suppose nothing's to stop you separating the eggs, whisking the whites and turning this into a lighter, frothier affair, but there is most definitely no call. This is easy to make, toothsome and comforting to eat, and I have Gaby SURNAME TO COME, to thank for it."*

There's something particularly gratifying in specifying a can of creamstyle sweetcorn in a recipe, but then I have a great sentimental affection for it. When I was about 12, it was my idea of gastronomic heaven. And needless to say, children love this: thrown together, in smaller quantities to be sure, and paired with some slices of shop-bought ham, it makes for a simple, stress-free tea, one that's likely to be eaten, not pushed whiningly to the side of the plate."

Ingredients:

- 5 eggs
- 510g can sweetcorn, drained
- 418g can creamed sweetcorn
- 300ml full fat milk
- 300ml double cream
- 60g plain flour
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 190 C/gas 5 and butter an ovenproof dish - and I use my old, scuffed pyrex one which measures 33cm x 25cm.

Whisk the eggs in a large bowl, and then add, beating unenergetically, all the other ingredients. Pour into the buttered dish and cook for about an hour, by which time it should have set within and puffed up slightly on the top.

Serves 8

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PASTA WITH MEATBALLS IN TOMATO SAUCE

Nigella: *"This is definitely time consuming, but here at least I make no apology for that. And there is nothing like serving up a bowl of pasta with meatballs to make you feel like an Italian mamma out of a Hollywood film. I don't mean one of those redoubtable types in amorphous black: think Sophia Loren in the kitchen. It works for me."*

The trick to these meatballs is to keep them small. Don't actually use a teaspoon, but use about a teaspoon's amount of mince to roll each ball. If there are children around, so much the better; they tend to like making these. But otherwise, they're easy enough, and the slow repetitiveness of the action can be rather calming."

Ingredients:

for the meatballs:

- 250g minced pork
- 250g minced beef
- 1 egg
- 2 tbsps freshly grated parmesan
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 3 tbsps semolina or breadcrumbs
- good grind black pepper
- 1 tspn salt

Just put everything in a large bowl, and then, using your hands, mix to combine, before shaping into small balls. Place the meatballs on baking sheets or plates that you have lined with clingfilm, and put in the fridge as you finish them.

for the Tomato sauce:

- 1 onion
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 tspn dried oregano
- 1 tbspn butter
- 1 tbspn olive oil (not extra virgin)
- 700g bottle tomato passata
- pinch sugar
- salt and pepper
- 100ml full fat milk

Put the onion, garlic and oregano into the process and blitz to a pulp. Heat the butter and oil in a deep wide pan, then scrape the onion-garlic mix into it and cook over a low-medium for about 10 minutes. Don't let the mixture catch, just let it become soft. Add the bottle of passata and then fill the empty bottle half full with cold water. Add this to the pan with the pinch of sugar, some salt and pepper, and cook for about 10 minutes. The tomato sauce will appear thin at this



This recipe was taken from 'Nigella Bites'. You can buy this in the [Channel 4 shop](#).

stage, but don't worry as it will thicken a little later. Stir in the milk, and then drop the meatballs in one by one. Don't stir the pan until the meatballs have turned from pink to brown as you don't want to break them up. Cook everything for about 20 minutes, with the lid only partially covering it. At the end of cooking time, check the seasoning as you may want more salt and a grind or two more of pepper.

Makes enough to sauce generously the pasta below, serving 6

PASTA

To go with these divine meatballs, I like tagliatelle. De Cecco, Spinosi or Cipriani brands are all very good, but making fresh pasta is an experience worth trying. No one's saying you have to make it, but actually once you do try, you'll soon see that it's not difficult. I had a pasta machine for years before I was brave enough to use it. For some reason I thought it would be a performance But I tried and it isn't, and I rather like the mood of peaceful concentration the activity ushers forth. And it's a great way of playing in the kitchen with children: they love turning the handle, which is actually a help, not often the case when the children are cooking with you.

Quantities are easy so long as you remember you need one egg per 100g of 00 flour (now available at most supermarkets), and that on average, one 'egg' of pasta, as it were, feeds two generously.

- 400g Italian 00 flour
- fat pinch salt
- 4 eggs

Either put the flour (with the salt) in a bowl and crack the eggs into it, or make a mound of flour on a worktop and add the eggs to that. I don't bother to beat them before adding them to the flour, but if you prefer to, then add them gradually, do. Just find the way that you prefer. All you do is mix the flour and eggs together, and then knead the mixture until it all comes together in a satiny mass. Kneading involves no more than pushing the mixture away from you with the heels of your hands and then bringing it back towards you. If you've got an electric mixer with a dough hook, then do use that, but for some reason I don't find it makes the pasta cohere any sooner. And you don't get the relaxing satisfaction of making it by hand.

When the pasta silky and smooth, form into a ball, cover with a cloth and leave for 30 minutes to an hour. Then get out your pasta machine, read the instructions and away you go. Two tips first: cut each slice you want to feed through the pasta machine as you go, and put through the no 1 press quite a few times, folding the strip in half and pushing it through again after each time. When the pasta dough's been fed a few times through the no1 slot, pass it through the remaining numbers on the gauge, before pushing it through the tagliatelle-cutters. And I find that the pasta strips cut into tagliatelle better if you leave them hanging over the table or wherever to dry a little first (10 minutes is enough).

When you cook the pasta, make sure you've got plenty of boiling salted water and start tasting immediately the water comes back to the boil after you've put the pasta in. Use about a third of the meatballs in their sauce to toss the cooked, drained pasta in and then pour the rest of them over the scantily sauced ribbons in the bowl. This is ambrosia: food to get you through the winter happily.

Serves 4-6

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CHOCOLATE CLOUD CAKE

Nigella: *"On days when I want the warmth of the hearth rather than the hurly burly of the city streets I stay in and read cookery books, and this recipe comes from just the sort of book that gives most succour, Classic Home Desserts by Richard Sax. The cake itself (which was the pudding I made for last New Year's Eve dinner) is as richly, rewardingly sustaining: a melting, dark flourless chocolate base, the sort that sinks damply on cooling; the fallen centre is then cloudily filled with softly whipped cream, and sprinkled with cocoa powder. As Richard Sax says 'intensity, then relief, in each bite'."*

Ingredients:

- 250g dark chocolate minimum 70% cocoa solids
- 125g unsalted butter, softened
- 6 eggs: 2 whole, 4 separated
- 175g caster sugar: 75g in the cake, 100g in whites
- 2 tbsps Cointreau (optional)
- grated zest of an orange (optional)
- 23cm springform cake tin

Cream topping:

- 500ml double cream
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tbspn Cointreau (optional)
- half tsp unsweetened cocoa powder for sprinkling

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 180C/gas mark 4.

Line the bottom of a 23cm Springform cake tin with baking parchment. Melt the chocolate either in a double boiler or a microwave, and then let the butter melt in the warm chocolate.

Beat the 2 whole eggs and 4 egg yolks with 75g caster sugar, then gently add the chocolate mixture, the Cointreau and orange zest.

In another bowl, whisk the 4 egg whites until foamy, then gradually add the 100g of sugar and whisk until the whites are holding their shape but not too stiff. Lighten the chocolate mixture with a dollop of egg whites, and then fold in the rest of the whites. Pour into the prepared tin and bake for about 35 to 40 minutes or until the cake is risen and cracked and the centre is no longer wobbly. Cool the cake in its tin on a wire rack; the middle will sink as it cools.

When you are ready to eat, place the still tin-bound cake on a cake stand or plate for serving and carefully remove the cake from its tin. Don't worry about cracks or rough edges: it's the crater look we're going for here. Whip the cream until soft and then add the vanilla and Cointreau and continue whisking until the cream is firm but not stiff. Fill the crater of the cake with the whipped cream, easing it out gently towards the edges of the cake, and dust the top lightly with cocoa powder pushed through a tea-strainer.

Serves 8-12

You can make this into an Easter Nest Cake by folding 200g melted chocolate into the cream topping and dotting with the sugar-coated eggs instead of the cocoa. Leave the Cointreau out of both the cake and the cream.

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ITALIAN SAUSAGES WITH LENTILS

Nigella: *"My mother used English sausages mostly, and those flat, sludgy lentils (Puy lentils weren't so easily available then) but this is at its best made with highly flavoured Italian sausages (I love the ones tagged 'Genovese', deep with garlic and basil) and either French puy lentils or the similar Italian ones from Umbria.*

This isn't about fancifying a downhome dish: it's about doing what feels right and responding to what's available; in short, it's about cooking.

This incidentally, is what Italians serve traditionally on New Year's Day; the coin-shaped lentils symbolise the prosperity that is hoped for over the coming year, much as Jewish tradition uses honey richly for the Rosh Hashanah meal to represent the wish for a sweet and happy life for the year ahead."

Ingredients:

- 3-4 tablespoons olive oil (not extra virgin)
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- sprinkling of salt
- 500g puy lentils
- 1 fat clove garlic, squished with the side of a knife, and skin removed
- 8 Italian sausages
- 100ml red wine
- 50ml water
- flat-leaf parsley for sprinkling

Instructions:

To cook the lentils, put 2-3 tablespoons of the oil into a good-sized saucepan (and one which has a lid that fits) on the heat and when it's warm add the chopped onion. Sprinkle with salt (which helps prevents it browning) and cook over a low to medium heat till soft (about 5 minutes). Add the lentils, stir well and then cover generously with cold water. Bring to the boil then cover, and let simmer gently for half an hour or so until cooked and most, if not all, the liquid's absorbed. I don't add salt at this stage since the sauce provided by the sausages later (and which will be poured over the lentils) will be pretty salty itself. So, wait and taste. And remember, you can of course cook the lentils in advance.

Anyway, when either the lentils are nearly ready or you're about to reheat them, put a heavy based frying pan on the hob, cover with a film of oil and add the bruised garlic. Cook for a few minutes then add and brown the sausages. When the sausages are brown on both sides - which won't take more than five minutes or so - throw in the wine and water



This recipe was taken from 'Nigella Bites'. You can buy this in the [Channel 4 shop](#).

and let bubble up. Cover the pan, either with a lid or tin foil and cook for about 15 minutes. Using a fork, mash the now-soft garlic into the sauce and taste for seasoning, adding a little more water if it's too strong. Remove the lentils to a shallowish bowl or dish (I evacuate the sausages from their cooking pan, plonk the lentils in, then proceed) then cover with the sausages and their garlicky winey gravy. Sprinkle over some flat-leaf parsley.

Serves 4

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MY GRANDMOTHER'S GINGER-JAM BREAD & BUTTER PUDDING

Nigella: *"This recipe comes from my maternal grandmother's recipe folder, a wonderfully retro piece of design, circa late sixties, early seventies. Bread and butter pudding has, I know, gone from stodgy disparagement to fashionable rehabilitation and back to not-that-again clichedom, but I am not prepared to let any of that bother me.*

This version uses brown bread rather than white, and between the buttery sandwiches is heaped chunky-hot ginger jam, sometimes sold as ginger marmalade, but most usually, if quaintly, as ginger conserve; on top is sprinkled demerara sugar mixed with aromatically warm ground ginger, the spice of the old fashioned English kitchen.

My grandmother, more austere, used milk; I go for mostly cream: nothing creates so well that tender-bellied swell of softly set custard".

Ingredients:

- 75g unsalted butter
- 75g sultanas
- 3 tbsps dark rum
- 10 slices brown bread
- approx. 10 x 15ml tbsps ginger conserve or marmalade
- 4 egg yolks
- 1 egg
- 3 tbsps caster sugar
- 500ml double cream
- 200ml full fat milk
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 2 tbsps demerara sugar

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 180C/gas mark 4

Grease a pudding dish with a capacity of about 1.5 litres with some of the butter.

Put the sultanas in a small bowl, pour the rum over, and microwave them for 1 minute, then leave to stand. This is a good way to soak them quickly but juicily.

Make sandwiches with the brown bread, butter and ginger jam (2 tablespoons in each sandwich); you should have some butter left over to smear on the top later. Now cut the sandwiches into half triangles and arrange them evenly along the middle of the pudding dish. I put one in the dish with the point of the sandwich upwards, then one with the flat side uppermost, then with point-side uppermost and so on, then squeeze a sandwich-triangle down each side. - but you do as you please. Sprinkle over the sultanas and unabsorbed rum that remains in the bowl.

Whisk the egg yolks and egg together with the caster sugar, and pour in the cream and milk. Pour this over the triangles of bread and leave them to soak up the liquid for about 10 minutes, by which time the pudding is ready to go into the oven. Smear the bread crusts that are poking out of the custard with the soft butter, mix the ground ginger and demerara sugar together and sprinkle this mixture on your buttered smeared crusts and then lightly over the rest of the pudding.

Sit the pudding dish on a baking sheet and put in the oven to cook for about 45 minutes or until the custard has set and puffed up slightly. Remove, let sit for about 10 minutes - by which time the puffiness will have deflated somewhat - and spoon out into bowls, putting a jug of custard, should you so wish, on the table to be served alongside.

Serves 6

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THE UNION SQUARE CAFÉS BAR NUTS

Nigella: *"More picking food, and ludicrously easy to make. You might think that nuts, untampered with, are perfect picking food as they are, and up to a point you'd be right. But try these, modestly adapted from the recipe for spiced nuts served at the Union Square Café in New York and you'll truly know what perfection is."*

Ingredients:

- 500g assorted unsalted nuts, including: peeled peanuts, cashews, Brazil nuts, hazelnuts, walnuts, pecans and whole unpeeled almonds * 2 tablespoons coarsely chopped fresh rosemary (from 2 8cm sprigs)
- half tsp cayenne pepper
- 2 teasp dark muscavado sugar
- 2 teasp Malden salt
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, melted

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 180C/ gas mark 4.

Toss the nuts in a large bowl to combine and spread them out on a baking sheet. Toast in the oven till they become light golden brown, about 10 minutes.

In a large bowl, combine the rosemary, cayenne, muscavado sugar, salt and melted butter.

Thoroughly toss the toasted nuts with the spiced butter and serve warm. And once you eat these, you will never want to stop.

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SPATCHCOCKED BIRDS

Nigella: *"For that point in the evening when people need to hunker down to some serious eating, you do need to provide something a little more substantial than plates for picking from. This is what I roll out during a summer's evening barbecuing. You can stick with just chicken if you want, but I've suggested poussins and quail as well, just because I like anything that produces that welcoming sense of the groaning board - and plus, it gives me the opportunity to suggest more than one marinade."*

The marinades themselves are to be regarded as the loosest blueprint. Use the flavourings you like, remembering that you need oil of some sort to prevent the meat from drying out and an acid- vinegars, citrus fruits - to tenderise it. The spatchcocked birds don't need to be cooked on the barbecue;



This recipe was taken from 'Nigella Bites'. You can buy this in the [Channel 4 shop](#).

an oven preheated to 220 or 240, gas mark 7 or 8, will do just fine. And because the birds are spatchcocked - that's to say, cut on one side and opened out, like a book - they need much less cooking time than surgically uninterfered with poultry, which can be useful if you've got time in advance for the spatchcocking and marinading and not much time on the night for actual cooking.

Any good butcher will spatchcock the birds for you, or you could ask the butchery section at the supermarket to do it, but it's easy enough for you to manage yourself at home. Just get a pair of poultry shears or tough scissors (I use a pair sold by someone on one of those door-to-door yellow duster trails made for cutting through tins and tough stuff) and lay the bird, breast side down, on a surface and cut through all along one side of the backbone. Then cut along the other side and - hey presto - the backbone can be removed and you then turn the bird other way up and press down as you open it out. You have in front of you a spatchcocked bird, ready for its marinade."

Ingredients:

1 Spatchcocked chicken - marinated in:

- juice of a lemon
- 2 tbsps black peppercorns, lightly crushed in a pestle and mortar * 100ml olive oil (not extra-virgin)
- 2 garlic cloves peeled and bruised

To sprinkle over:

- Malden salt
- A handful of fresh parsley, chopped

Spatchcocked poussins - marinated in:

- juice of 2 limes
- 2 tbsps coriander seeds
- 100ml groundnut or vegetable oil
- a good grinding of black pepper

To sprinkle over:

- Malden salt
- bunch of fresh coriander, chopped

of Spatchcock quails - marinated in:

- 1 bunch of spring onions, sliced finely
- 100ml vegetable oil
- dash toasted sesame oil
- 2cm chunk fresh ginger, unpeeled and chopped roughly
- 1 tbspn rice vinegar
- 1 tbspn soy sauce

To sprinkle over:

- Malden salt
- Bunch of fresh coriander, chopped

Instructions:

Sit the birds in their marinade in a dish into which they fit snugly, cover with Clingfilm and leave in the fridge, preferably overnight or for 24 hours, though even a couple of hours would have an effect.

When the barbecue is good and hot, lift the birds out of their marinade and cook on the barbie until the flesh has lost all

raw pinkness but is still tender within and the skin is crisp and burnished and blistered. It's hard to be precise about times, since barbecues differ even more than ovens do, but on my barbecue - a gas-fired Outdoor Chef, which I love to distraction and, since it has a lid, I use even in the winter rain - the chicken takes about 35 minutes, the poussins 15 and the quail about 7.

Along with Malden salt, sprinkle freshly chopped parsley over the chicken, coriander over the poussins and quail, or use whatever other herb seems right for the marinades you've concocted.

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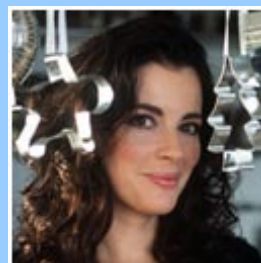
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